

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For More Information Contact

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Funding Available for Organizations Serving Summer Meals to Virginia Children

Deadline to apply for this year's Summer Food Service Program is April 25, 2014

(Richmond, VA)— The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) is looking for financially viable organizations that can serve meals to children during the summer months. Organizations that participate in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) will be reimbursed by VDH for the meals that are served. Participating sponsors will also be reimbursed for certain allowable administrative costs associated with serving the meals. In addition, all participating organizations receive technical assistance from VDH staff. All participating sponsors are required to attend the SFSP training provided by VDH. Training dates will be publicized on VDH's [SFSP website](#) when finalized.

Virginia's children need and deserve nutritious meals continuously throughout the year to maintain healthy minds and bodies. Hunger is one of the most severe roadblocks to an individual's learning process. Lack of access to nutritional meals during the summer sets the stage for a student's poor performance once the next school year begins. **Remember, childhood hunger doesn't take a summer vacation.** The SFSP fills the nutrition gap when school's out and children do not have access to the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs.

Virginia's SFSP operates in schools, public housing centers, community centers, playgrounds, camps, parks and churches. Sponsors that may qualify for this program include: public or private nonprofit schools; local, municipal, county, state or Federal governments; public or private nonprofit residential summer camps; and private nonprofit organizations including faith- or community-based organizations.

Organizations interested in obtaining more information about the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) or in requesting an application to participate should call VDH at **1-877-618-7282** or visit VDH's [SFSP website](#). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) also is offering a series of [free webinars](#) for organizations and individuals interested in participating in the SFSP.

If becoming a sponsor is not a good fit, but an organization is interested in feeding children in a specific area during the summer months, please consider partnering with an existing sponsor and participating as a meal site under that sponsor. In that case, please call the toll-free number above and ask for a list of existing sponsors in your area that may be able to add your organization as a meal location.

(more)

The deadline for submitting an application to participate in this year's Summer Food Service Program is April 25, 2014.

Funding for the Summer Food Service Program is provided by the USDA and administered by VDH. The program provides nutritious meals in economically disadvantaged areas to children age 18 and younger and to students over the age of 18 who are mentally or physically disabled that participate in a vocational program. The SFSP is an equal opportunity program serving meals at no charge to all children regardless of race, color, national origin, sex or disability.

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